

H.R. 5536, The Protecting American Commerce and Travel Act

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A comprehensive bill to improve and enhance WHTI

Rep. Louise Slaughter (D-NY) and Rep. John McHugh (R-NY)

Key Provisions

- Extends the WHTI deadline until September 15, 2009.
- Requires one consistent implementation date for land, sea and air travel.
- Requires DHS/State to develop a plan to re-admit into the country spontaneous U.S. travelers who do not possess a passport/acceptable alternative document.
- Exempts children younger than 16 from the WHTI documentary requirements.
- Sets standards for linking in REAL ID with WHTI by requiring that DHS/State report to Congress within 120 days on the

- Sets the price of a NEXUS/FAST card at \$20 and waives the first-time renewal fee.

- Requires that NEXUS/FAST be acceptable documents under WHTI, as well as acceptable for re-entry into the US at any border crossing.

- Requires NEXUS/FAST technology to be installed at additional crossings in North Dakota, Michigan, New York, Montana and Minnesota.

- Establishes a minimum of six new enrollment centers across the northern border, and creates new mobile enrollment centers that will sign up applicants in low-participation areas.

- Requires DHS/State to complete a cost-benefit analysis of their final WHTI plan before implementation. A cost-benefit analysis will require DHS/State to empirically prove that the security and economical benefits of WHTI outweigh the costs to travel and trade.

- Requires that DHS/State work with the Canadian and Mexican governments to ensure their citizens have the right documents to enter the US.

- Requires DHS/State to develop and implement a WHTI public promotion campaign.

* The Government Accountability Office has already agreed to Rep. Slaughter and Rep. McHugh's request to evaluate and audit the entire implementation of the Western Hemisphere Travel Initiative.